

THE POEMS OF
GILBERT WHITE

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
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A few have never been
printed before

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TO THE MEMORY OF
M. E. W.
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

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INTRODUCTION

POETRY should be the flower and outcome of the writer's life. So Tennyson told a working man who sent him his verses. Milton had said long before that if we would write poetry our life should be a poem. Such the life of the author of the verses contained in this modest volume assuredly has been. Bishop Gilbert White's career has been a "sacred poem," a personal epic, an *Odyssey* of wanderings and experiences, of battling with elemental force, of being confronted with nature and human nature in their wildest forms ; of traversing trackless deserts, thridding forests "penetrable by no star," sailing over waters when no other ship was within hail ; carrying the " creed of creeds " to

*Those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.*

INTRODUCTION

The little poem entitled “The Adventure” may not be exactly autobiographical, but there is no doubt that the author might, without exaggeration, use much of the language of the first voyaging missionary of Christianity, the writer of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and say with him that he has been “in journeyings often, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”

He has told the story in prose in his volumes “Round About the Torres Straits” and “Thirty Years in Tropical Australia.”

These poems cover, so their title tells us, some five-and-thirty years. All but two of these years have been spent in Australia. Dr. White, like St. Paul, and later Rudyard Kipling, is a child of the Empire of his day. Born at Rondebosch in Cape Colony in 1859, he was sent home in infancy, and educated in Scotland and Oxford, first at Fettes College, and then, as his name made fitting, at the “house” of the author of

“White’s Selborne” and of his own contemporary Cecil Rhodes, Oriel College. Like Rhodes he left England as a young man in search of health. In 1885 he went out, having just been ordained, to North Queensland. Fifteen years later he was consecrated as the first Bishop of Carpentaria, and fifteen years later again was translated southward to the less torrid and tremendous, but still arduous, new See of Willochra in South Australia.

His headquarters for many years was that remote “outpost of Empire,” as he calls it, Thursday Island, lying off the extreme northern point of Australia, the long promontory ending in Cape York, which forms the eastern barrier of the great gulf, which was his first bishopric. He has described the beauty of the spot in poetic prose—its coral-fenced lagoons a veritable under-sea paradise—like that of “The Voyage of Maeldune.” Next door to it, by a strange contrast, is Friday Island, then the home of the “lepers.”

INTRODUCTION

From that centre he traversed in his missionary ketch the *Francis Pritt* the waters of the vast tropical gulf. He visited the neighbouring shores and islands ; he travelled over the “Table-lands” and the “Western Plains,” explored the great rivers, scaled the mountains, and above all made the still dangerous and difficult transit from the beautiful town of Port Darwin on the north coast to Adelaide in the south.

Few living men know Australia better. He has penetrated where no white man had been before. He knows the so-called “blackfellow” (his flock were really in every sense brown not black sheep) better than any other white man. The romance of religion has been his. Australia, in ways which even now we hardly realize, is a very great country. It is as large as the United States, and it has four coast-lines instead of two.

It is a land of heat and fire which seems to enter into the being and genius of its denizens. Their fiery deeds “at Anzac and Pozières” are

now historic. In these inverted regions the north is the most fiery part, with its fierce animals and perhaps still fiercer plants.

The poems here gathered reflect the land and man. The traveller, the scholar, the naturalist, the missionary, the moral and religious teacher and ruler all appear. They are happily arranged. They begin with the Book of Nature, "which he who runs may read," and end with the "Book of Life." The Bishop sees with the eye of a geologist and an astronomer. He reads in the Blue Mountains their "strange-scrawled" story, the past ages of fire and ice, which have lifted the molten crust into jagged pinnacles, and then filled the extinct crater with the fathomless lake, and gouged and chiselled the gorge and cañon, and then carries back his mind to the still earlier æons of the genesis of the solar system, of planet and comet.

He is, too, an accomplished scholar, reading Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, and German. A great promontory suggests the

rugged, stark strength of *Æschylus*. One of the most charming pieces is the little adaptation from the French entitled “*Dormeuse*.” His earlier volume contained a most graceful love-song, “*From the Spanish*.” But his main interests are more direct and daily. The love of mother and wife and child and friend—these are the commonplaces which the ancient critic tells us it is the secret of each new and fine poet to tell in his own new way. “*A Farewell*” is such a piece. Then there is the “*Care of the Churches*” and the life of faith. A most striking piece is “*The Lonely Priest*”; another is the exhortation “*To Mothers*.” Those who have read the Bishop’s “*Thirty Years*” will know how well deserved is the beautiful elegiac *éloge* on Florence Buchanan, Deaconess.

There are naturally hymns and sacred poems of occasions for the dedication of a sisterhood chapel, for baptism, for Whit-Sunday, and the like.

But the strongest poems of occasion are those

for the greatest occasion Australia or the world has seen. It is significant that the most forcible pieces in this volume are the sequence entitled "Australia," written in 1913, in 1917, and in 1918. They are truly the poems of a prophet, the echo of a veritable "warning voice," which one who could see the Apocalypse "heard cry," and they still have their call. The first was written, it should be noted, in the very year before the war.

Australia's poets were her prophets. Essex Evans bade her "prepare" "before too late." John Sandes sounded the same note, adjuring "the child of the dawn" not to be found "the child of the night." But none struck a loftier note than Bishop Gilbert White in his appeal in the sacred name of the Cross to Australia's sons and daughters.

Happy the country, the Empire, which has such prophets—and listens to them. For himself he makes no claim to any laurel. The poem just alluded to was first published anonymously.

INTRODUCTION

"Fight," he says to himself and to others.
"Be very large your heart," but withal "be
humble."

The chalice, thou, and not the wine.

It is a privilege to be asked to speak of and for him, though, in truth, his "Fortezza ed umilitade e largo core" speak best for themselves.

H. W.

NATURE

THE VISION

FROM the Barrier steep where the breakers leap,
And the tide-rips ruffle and croon,
To the little bay, where the small waves play,
Came the sound of the East monsoon.

And the fronds of the palm clashed a shrill alarm
As the stem bent under the strain,
And I stood on the verge where rock meets surge,
And the spindrift drives like rain.

For the sun was high, nor a cloud in the sky,
And the reefs were plain to view,
Red, purple, and brown, with their coral crown,
Fringed white on a mantle of blue.

And I looked and I thought, "Alas, there is naught
But an endless come and go,
For who felt the breeze or watched the seas
In the ages of long ago ;

" In the days ere man and his thoughts began,
In the senseless days of old ?
Who will feel or see, in the years to be
When man and his works are cold ? "

THE VISION

Then sudden as light mine eyes had sight,
I know not whence or how,
And the world was alive, like the swarming hive
As it droops from the apple bough.

Each wave on the sand felt the thrill of the land
And called to the wave behind,
And the wave far away as it sprang into spray
Felt the send of the Ocean's mind.

For the sea had a life, and a joy in its strife,
As it worked for its Master's behest,
And the wind ran along, swift, purposeful, strong,
On a vast and tireless quest.

And the palm, as it swayed, cried aloud and
prayed
For strength to blossom and bear,
And the blue sky shed, like gossamer thread,
A thousand cords through the air.

From the sky to the tree, from the sand to the sea,
Sped messages ceaseless between,
In their haste to fulfil the omnipotent Will
Of the Worker That worketh unseen.

On His highest throne He dwelleth alone,
Ineffable King of kings.
I only knew that mine eyes looked through
And I saw to the heart of things.

As the watcher may know from the heave of the
dough

The hand of the maker of bread,
As the breath like a cloud o'er the white snow-
shroud
Shows life where all seems dead ;

So the waves seemed to leap from an arm's
strong sweep,

And the wind like a breath did feel,
And the tree seemed to stand as though caught
by a hand,
And the sand seemed the dust of a heel.

And I felt He was there, my wonder to share,
The Workman and Master in one ;
Who nothing demands from the work of His
hands,
But to work till His work be done.

Ah ! how oft since then have I stood again
With fast-beating heart by the shore !
But the path that I trod in that vision of God
Comes back to me nevermore.

From the Barrier steep where the breakers leap
And the tide-rips ruffle and croon,
To the little bay, where the small waves play,
Comes the hum of the East monsoon ;

THE VISION

And the fronds of the palm still clash their alarm
As the stem bends under the strain
And the waters surge on the rock-strewn verge,
And the spindrift drives like rain.

1909

NIGHT

SLEEP the mountains wrapped in purple
Underneath the golden west,
Dies the day in mystic glory,
Rises night in shadows drest.

O the silence ! O the wonder
Of the lustrous, tropic night !
With her noiseless hosts attended,
Flitting shapes that shun the light.

Far away the stars are gleaming,
Silent sentinels above ;
In and out the fireflies wander,
Stars that glow with earthly love.

Silently the dew is falling,
On the parched and heated earth ;
And a thousand outpoured odours
Usher in the evening's birth.

Scent of fragrant gum and wattle,
Scent of palm and flowering reed,
Scent of pine and fig and cedar,
Scent of trampled flower and seed.

Stand the gum-trees like an army,
 Gaunt and pale with vesture torn,
Gathered ghostly in the darkness
 Waiting signal-gun at dawn.

Like a fortress wall the jungle
 Looms impenetrably calm ;
Far within a watchful night-bird
 Shrilly sounds her weird alarm,

Dart the tiny bats a-scouting
 Where the shadows toss and swing,
Sweep the giant flying-foxes,
 Fanning slow on dusky wing.

Hark, with haunting ululations
 Sounds a famished dingo's cry,—
Like the wail of lost, sad spirits
 Flung against the unheeding sky.

Shoots a star in trailing glory,
 Guardian angel of the night ;
Faint a wandering horse-bell tinkles,
 Curfew of the faded light.

As the weary diver, plunging
 Deep beneath the sunlit wave,
Rises far from ocean's turmoil
 In some cool and darkened cave ;

Lies and listens to the breakers
Far from fret and vain alarm ;
Drinks the silence and the wonder,
Resting head on tired arm ;

Till again new-braced he plunges,
Through the twilight of the deep,
Opens out the tumbling sunshine
Giant-like refreshed with sleep.

So is dark-browed night our refuge
From the world's hot restless waves,
Steep we weary eyes and bodies
In its calm and dusky caves.

Stronger for its rest and silence
Go we forth to wearying day ;
Bearing all the heat and burden
Till in darkness ends our way :

Darkness mystical and gracious,
Calmness after lifelong strife ;
Night of resting and refreshment,
Prelude of the fuller life !

SEA SLEEP

STILL sleeps the sea, criss-crossed with seams,
Like some old woman's face, who dreams
Of days when life deemed naught was wrong,
When hope flushed high and pulse beat strong,
Ere breath of sorrow cold and bleak
Had wrinkled brow or furrowed cheek.

The sun is set : the mountain peaks
Rise velvet black, o'ershoot with streaks
Of golden mist : the under sky
Is whitening slowly, loth to die
And leave the jewelled clouds, that play
Athwart the fading rim of day.

Above, the violet purple glow
Is deepening, till pure indigo
Night's mantle hangs undimmed aloft,
Set golden thick with lustrous soft
And trembling stars, whose wave-touched light
Goes quivering in and out of sight.

With patient eyes they watch her sleep,
Sole comrades of the lonely deep
In far-off nights of primal gloom,

Ere life had swarmed within her womb ;
Or nestless man had dared to trace
His first ship's furrow o'er her face.

For when the stars are lost to sight,
The angry sea awakes in fright,
And starts and moans in vague unrest,
As gusty passion stirs her breast,
Then through the veil of threatening cloud
To her lost friends she cries aloud.

And ever, as the wind grows more
She answers with an angrier roar,
Like beast, that, held 'twixt wrath and fear,
Half courts the creeping hunter's spear,
Until, the storm's dark fury past,
The ancient stars look forth at last.

Then, weary with her fierce alarm,
She falls once more from rage to calm,
Beneath those ever-watchful eyes,
That look upon her from the skies ;
Once more with trust her soul is blest,
And with one sigh she sinks to rest.

THINGS THAT ARE SEEN

WEARY was I of the work's fret,
Weary of speaking in vain,
Weary of ending and outset,
Weary of world's joy and pain.

Where was the strength of the Lord's arm ?
Where was His promise of old ?
Sunk was His Church in a death calm ;
Only His mockers were bold.

“ Where is your God ? ” cried the wise men,
“ Come, we're no longer at school,
Reason and logic speak. Now, then,
Answer or dub yourself fool.”

“ Where is your God ? ” cried the base hearts ;
“ Where is your babble of sin ?
Earth and its good things for our parts ;
Wit, push and money must win.”

Slowly I walked to the window,
Slowly my heart was at rest,
Gazing o'er earth's purple night-glow
Out through the door of the west.

Surely the Master Magnific
 Barely had passed on His way.
 Dashed on His canvas gigantic
 There lay His gift of to-day.

Palest pink shot with vermillion,
 Crumbling clouds hued manifold,
 Madder, mauve, red-rose and crimson
 Molten with white heat of gold.

Infinite ocean of amber,
 Studded with jewels of light :
 Fathomless vision of wonder,
 Mirror of skill and of might.

Surely I almost had seen Him,
 Visibly He had been there,
 Ever earth's shadows grew more dim,
 Ever that glory more fair.

Answer, ye wise men, my question :
 Whence comes a beauty so kind ?
 Lavished on moorland and ocean,
 Means it aught else but a mind ?

Answer, ye base hearts, my question :
 Whence comes this inner delight,
 Deeper than earthly emotion,
 Kin to the infinite ?

THINGS THAT ARE SEEN

Words may mean much or mean nothing,
Arguments fail thus or so :
Little I reck of their trending,
For I have seen and I know.

1907

SUNSET

Across the moor the darkling shadows fall
To where the far-off mountains cut the sky ;
Above, a storm-cloud black as funeral pall,
Below, a slit of sunset like an eye,
Within whose pulsing depths there shines a light,
Exceeding vision, mystical and pure,
Like mother's face on child that fears the night,
Calm, lamp-illumined, troubleless and sure.
And still the sunset lingers in the west,
As though God whispered " Children, do not fear,
O tired world, be still and take your rest,
Nor dark, nor tempest matter ! I am near ! "

1917

AT NIGHT

THE moon, a slender crescent, burnished from afar

With radiance from day's lingering golden light,

Swung from the blazing pivot of the evening star

On the white bosom of the growing night,
Beneath whose breast an ebon fairy-fretted cloud

Hung o'er her like a scarf of dusky lace :
Her eyes were stars that sparkled through the glimmering shroud

That veiled the hidden glory of her face.
In solemn silence kneeling gave I thanks to God,
Who after day's hot storming giveth calm
And sends His handmaid night to those on earth
who plod

To soothe their troubled souls with healing balm.

1917

THE SEA

I

THOU mighty ocean, where we pass upborne
In that uneasy tenement a ship ;
Mysterious mantle flung across the dead
And awful silences of deepest earth ;
Against the sky now fluttering tempest-torn,
Now sleeping pearly soft with shimmering haze ;
Thy rage and glory pass and leave no sign,
But in the poet's heart they cannot die.

II

A cold, grey sea with flecks of sullen foam,
That ever rears itself impatiently
To meet the hissing never-ceasing drip
Of ashen skies, impenetrably grey ;
No east, no west, no forward, no return,
And in the midst a boat, wherein a man
Sits bowed on aimless oars, and ever turns
A hopeless eye on barren sky and sea.

III

A silver plain with softly rippling waves :
A great moon hanging in a cloudless sky :

A wayward breeze that gently fills the sail,
 A plashing prow, a far-off gleaming wake.
 The sky looks peace, and peace smiles out the
 sea,
 The breeze sighs peace, and peace the heart of
 man ;
 And slowly sinks the moon and droops the breeze
 And dies, until the restless waters sleep.

IV

The softest gales are wafting on the ship
 O'er sunlit gently swelling waves, that break
 Beneath the prow to foam sky-blue, or white
 As new drift snow, while far on either hand
 The flying-fish with rainbow-tinted sides
 Flash frightened, and a school of porpoise play
 Their heavy gambols, hurtling through the air,
 Or rolling shining flanks against the sun.

V

A ship that plunges shuddering down the heave
 Of giant rollers, 'mid the yeasty drift
 Of yellow foam that streams in flickering ropes
 From straining cordage, while the frantic wind
 Is howling, like a famished beast that sees
 And smells its prey, yet cannot break its bar,
 But follows up and down and shrieks its rage ;
 So flies the ship and on her track the wind.

NOON

THE brown earth shrinks in a voiceless swoon
While round her shoulders the cruel noon
 Is casting his fiery cloak ;
It scorches her grassy tresses through
It takes her lingering jewels of dew
 From the bole of the sheltering oak.

Her cloudy chaplet is all undone,
And in fury blind the tyrant sun
 Is smiting her drooping head.
Her sweet bird voice, that thrilled each tree
With an all-night-long expected glee,
 Is with her spirit fled.

“ Our mother earth is dead,” they cry,
The children who upon her lie,
 And feel her bosom still ;
“ Our mother earth is dead, and we
Are left in orphaned misery,
 To face the coming ill.”

But hark a softly swelling sigh,
A whisper as of succour nigh
 Is passing o'er her frame ;

Her leafy tresses rise and fall,
 A voice mysterious runs through all,
 And calls her by her name.

Her eyes unclose and in her ears
 A wildly musical tone she hears,
 A voiceless whisper of love :
 "I come from the throne of God," it cries
 "Thy need was seen by the ceaseless eyes
 That ever watch thee above."

The noon is over, the heat declines,
 See from the dark green sentinel pines
 The deep'ning shadows grow.
 Let not again thy soul despair
 In the tyrant noonday's cruel glare !
 At even the wind shall blow.

O soul that art seared within
 With the death-clinging garment of sin,
 Parched and all but dead,
 Soothing thy fever, cooling thy heat,
 Lo, God's Holy Paraclete !
 Listen and raise thy head !

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

O SILENT calm of God, that o'er the eternal hills
Dost rest, so full of voiceless songs of praise,
That gratingly the stonechat's quick, sharp chirp
Doth sound as in the council of grave men,
Where life and death are hung upon a word,
There jars the pert intrusion of a child.
What meaner tongue could voice aright thy note
Save his who sang the master hymn of Blanc,
And showed to men the light that now all see !

Ye pale gold cliffs that front the rising sun,
And drink the noonday heat in rifted cracks
Where lizards bask, do ye recall the days,
Ten myriad years ago, ye lay unknit
In yellow sand and heard the breakers roar,
And felt the thunder of primeval seas ?
Or all the untold years of buried sleep,
From which ye woke in some great throes of earth
To front again the sunshine and the dawn ?

Ye valleys soft with whispering trees, and filled
With gentlest rippling of low-murmuring streams,
With garden lands and smoke of household fires,
How saw ye once the boiling torrents rage

And foaming eddies swirl from cliff to cliff
While yet no tender green bedecked your caves,
Or forest pine waved o'er the barren gorge !
Ye mists and clouds that haunt these lonely
hills,

Now swiftly rushing up the mountain sides
With outstretched arms and grasping finger
wreaths,
And drawing darkness up till all the day

Is swallowed up in circling swirls of gloom ;
Now rolling downwards billowy waves that
float

From out the crag-tops o'er the sun-bright plain,
What say ye to the mountains as ye cling
About their summits secret and alone ?

“ Remember ye the days when we were young,
Not these poor feeble ghosts of our old selves,
How, full of lusty strength and headlong power,
We downward flung wild rushing walls of rain
That smote your rock-crowned brows with cease-
less blows,
And tore great valleys in your vexed side ? ”

Ye firm-based mountains, eldest born of earth,
With crag-girt sides and grey-green robe of
trees,
What have ye witnessed since ye reared your
heads
From out the weltering waste of giant seas ?

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

31

Ten thousand years may pass with all their
storms
And leave you still the same calm loveliness.

Thou purple haze that with thy tender bloom
Dost wrap the scene and make the dullest
scaur

Reflect the light that rested on the hills,
The happy, happy hills of Paradise,
What whisperest thou at fall of summer eve
To slumbering mount and vale, and watching
stars,
What praise of Him Who made the world so
fair ?
With sweetest undervoice ye all proclaim
The praise of Him with Whom a thousand years
Are as one day, the God by Whom is all ;
Nor less ye praise Him that we hear you not.

1905

THE WANDERERS

FAR adown the ages
When in primal night,
Rose the worlds from Chaos
Into shape and sight,

God devised the Sun-star,
Lord of light and heat,
Fixed him firm for ever
In his sovereign seat.

Set around him planets
Ruddy with his fire,
Radiant with his glory
Circling round their sire.

Circling in their order,
In their mystic plan,
While the angels shouted
When the worlds began.

Rose from all creation
One exultant song ;
Every course was faithful,
Every purpose strong.

But in time some planets
Wearied on their way,
And within their courses
Would no longer stay.

With a sudden impulse
Each one left his place
And on differing pathways
Fled they into space.

Longer grew the distance,
Dimmer grew the light ;
Soon familiar landmarks
All were lost to sight.

Dimmer grew the sunlight
As each fled afar ;
Till its wonted glory
Dwindled to a star.

Then the planets faltered,
Chilled with growing fear
At the awful distance,
At the darkness drear.

Turned half round bewailing
What they scorned before,
Yearning for the station
Theirs by right no more.

THE WANDERERS

Slowly turned and trembled
Held 'twixt love and shame,
Swerved and bowed and travelled
Towards the central flame.

As they journeyed onward
Grew the light and heat,
Grew the planets bolder,
Grew their course more fleet ;

Past their ordered brethren,
Till, their journey done,
Trembling and rejoicing
Sank they in the sun ;

Sank beneath the billows
Of his crimson fire,
Like a moth that shrivels
Gaining its desire.

Pale and shrunk reissued
Into upper day,
Form and solid substance
Throughly purged away.

Spectral in their terror
Sprang upon their flight,
Clothed with golden tresses,
Skeins of living light.

Forth upon their old path
Ever doomed to roam,
Ever sick with longing
For their ancient home.

So at times men see each
Pale and ghostly star,
Ever towards the sunlight
Rushing from afar.

Comets do men name them ;
In their headlong race,
With their pale hair streaming
Through the wastes of space.

Fain to plunge and hide them
In the healing fire,
And at length forgiven,
Sun-consumed, expire.

Yet they may not reach him,
May not end their pain ;
Ever on new wanderings
Driven forth again :

Till, their penance ended,
God shall hope reveal,
Grant once more their orbit
And their pardon seal.

THE WANDERERS

When the last redeemed one
Shall be drawn from earth,
When the ancient heavens,
Have their second birth ;

Then shall God create them
Mansions for the blest,
Pardon them and grant them
His eternal rest.

1898

GAIRLOCH

FRIENDS who have your Paradise
On the Gairloch River,
Grateful for your courtesy
Thank I thus the giver.

In your peaceful solitudes
Naught but parrots wrangle,
Swinging in the topmost trees,
And the vines' wild tangle.

Sweet the orange and the lime,
Citron and banana ;
Heavy hangs the mango fruit
O'er the pink lantana.

Still I hear the fruitful palms
Rattle 'mid their sighing ;
From a wedge of geese o'erhead
Comes the sound of flying.

Chiefly of your beauties rare
One day I remember,
When the fiery summer heat
Broke in late December.

GAIRLOCH

Idly by the river cast,
All the world well-wishing,
Watched I sun and shadow sweep,
Careless of my fishing.

Watched the burramundi gleam
Through the clear brown eddies,
And the long-nosed garfish glide
Where the current steadies.

From her far-off jungle nook
Heard the bell-bird calling,
Silenced by the sudden crash
Of the timber falling.

Watched the ripening sugar-cane
Wave its emerald tresses,
Fling its rustling streamers free
From the wind's caresses.

Saw the veil of gathering clouds
O'er the Seymour ranges,
Shadows drive o'er Hinchinbrook,
Wondrous in its changes.

Heard the murmur of the storm
Rolling ever nearer,
While each rock and mountain peak
Shone out all the clearer.

With a strange and reddish glow
Shone the ruffled water ;
Hotter burnt the sun ; the breeze
Blew from every quarter.

Like a skin of purple wine
Filled to overflowing,
Trembling hung the cloud awhile
O'er the earth's dry glowing.

Came a glare of yellow fire,
All too swift for wonder,
Reeled the earth beneath the shock
Of that awful thunder.

Down with sullen hiss and swirl
Swept the deluge foaming ;
Swiftly, like a lamp outblown,
Day was turned to gloaming.

O the gladness of the sound
How the heaven outpoureth !
Organ-blast from God's own Hand,
How it deafeneth, roareth.

Everywhere the waters whirl,
Spouting, gurgling, dashing ;
All around the thunders roll
Volleying, cracking, crashing ;

GAIRLOCH

Till it slowly dies away
With a surly rumble ;
And the waters gentler fall,
Flash and swish and tumble.

See the sun again look out,
Gloriously he shineth ;
And the earth smiles back again,
For no more she pineth.

From o'er-roofing leafy nooks
Birds and flies are peeping ;
From the shade of hollow logs
Little beasts are creeping.

All the world is glad, and I
Smile when I remember,
How the rain came down at last
In the late December.

1897

BY THE RIVER

With weary wings flying,
With soughing and sighing,
The sea breeze is dying
Away on the land.

Riverwards bending,
With lowings unending,
The cattle are wending
Their way through the sand.

The lizards are peeping,
And stealthily creeping,
Or warily keeping
The shade of the rock.

With infinite clatter,
And babel of chatter
On every bird matter
The tree-parrots flock.

In mad whirl entrancing
The tree-flies are dancing,
With green flashes glancing
From wing-case and plume.

BY THE RIVER

Amid all their playing
The mantis is praying,
In hopes of betraying
Some fool to its doom.

By hundreds arriving,
With crafty contriving
The red ants are striving
To pull down their food.

With lightning-like flashes
The hunting wasp dashes,
And bears to its caches
The prey for its brood.

All nature is stirring,
Cicalas are whirring,
And tree-crickets chirring
For joy of the sun.

The grass is aquiver,
The reeds by the river
Awake with a shiver
The breeze has begun.

MAN

AUSTRALIA : 1913

O LAND of the good grass plains,
Where wander the countless kine,
Fair land of the swelling downs,
That are fat with corn and wine,

Whose capes for ten thousand miles
Shock full to the surging tide,
And girdle the far-flung hills,
Where the gold and silver hide.

Where slowly the vaster winds,
Than blow in the older world,
Are wafting from south to north
Thy banner of peace unfurled.

O land where the whitening dawn
Turns ever a smiling face,
Where nature is kind of heart,
Fit home for a goodly race.

O land that our fathers gained,
Through hunger and thirst and toil,
Uprooting the matted scrub,
And ploughing the world-old soil.

They scorched on the fiery plains,
And gasped on the desert sand,
They tramped out the white man's trail,
And sighted the promised land.

They waited and worked and won,
Strong men of the ancient stock,
As true to their friends as steel,
In trouble and danger rock.

Their sons, by their toiling, heirs
To leisure and wealth and ease,
Give thanks to their gods that they
Have only themselves to please.

O men of a race too small
To handle your father's spade,
To shoulder the ringing axe
And level the forest glade.

Ye crowd to the reeking town,
And swarm in the stifling street
But shrink from the calling land,
Too rough for your dainty feet.

Ye measure and dole your work,
Give least for the greatest pay,
Work not for the honour of work,
But only for means to play.

Your wives have a barren womb,
 Your stock fill the empty wild,
 Your paddocks are filled with lambs,
 Your homes with a single child.

Endowed with a land set free
 From hunger, disease, and war,
 You gather your easy gold,
 And hug to yourselves your store.

“O pleasure, be thou our god.”
 Comes ever your restless cry ;
 “To-day let us eat and drink,
 To-morrow, perchance, we die.”

O people that honour well
 Your prophets that flatter your pride,
 Grown used to resent alarms,
 And turn on the other side.

Ye sneer at the faithful friends
 Who care for your honest name,
 Condemning as traitors vile
 The sons who bewail your shame.

Who count you as souls asleep,
 Not dead to the nobler strife,
 Who bid you arise and stand,
 And strive even yet for life.

By all the good gifts of God,
 By all the fair hopes for man,
Awake from the sleep of death,
 And fight while as yet ye can.

By all that have died for men,
 By Christ Who endured the Cross,
Count nothing but honour gain,
 Count all that is selfish loss.

Take up with a loyal heart
 The burden upon you laid :
Who fights on the side of God
 Need never to be afraid.

Be true to the great good land,
 And rear 'neath the southern sun
A race that shall hold its own,
 And last till the world be done.

O land that we love so well,
 Awake and redeem thy fate,
Arise ere the watchers cry—
 “O land of lost hopes—too late.”

AUSTRALIA : 1917

Across the equator's calm,
Adown the untroubled breeze,
The sound of a sharp alarm
Came thrilling athwart the seas.

The rattle and roar of guns,
The droning and crash of shell,
The shout of advancing Huns,
The creaking of gates of hell.

Foul horror on horror piled,
The shrieking of girls distraught,
The scream of the murdered child,
The curses of men that fought.

For battle was joined that day,
For freedom, for home and right ;
No choice for a world at bay
But cower a slave or fight.

Though dully from over sea,
Half heard and at second hand,
The tale came slowly to thee,
O fortunate southern land !

Yet quick at the first far breath
The best of thy sons arose ;
They swore to keep tryst with death
In face of their country's foes.

The bravest among the brave,
They showed what a man can dare
Who rest in an honoured grave
At Anzac and Pozières.

True breed of the pioneer,
They rallied to duty's call ;
They saw the far issue clear,
And flung to the winds their all.

They won an immortal fame,
Which talkers now seek to share
To cover the growing shame
Of shirkers who are not there.

Oh, loud on the cold night wind,
Oh, bitter across the sea,
The No ! from the kin unkind,
The twists of their selfish plea.

Three years with each month a year,
Three years in the jaws of hell,
And hundreds of thousands here
Who will not give them a spell.

By grace of the party boss
Exempt by a narrow vote,
They shun every risk and loss,
Secured by a petticoat.

What good is a shameful breath
If tyranny reigns supreme ?
Is slavery better than death ?
Is honour a foolish dream ?

Australia ! Wake from sleep
And hasten to help your own,
Lest what you have sown you reap,
And waken to stand alone.

Alone with a lasting shame
For honour and faith undone ;
Alone with a tainted name
While history's ages run.

1917

AUSTRALIA : 1918

GREAT Southern land, whose sons at duty's call
From Darwin's palms to Kosciusko's snow,
From Cairns to Perth, from Broome to Buffalo,
Sprang to the summons, sunburnt, straight and tall,

Content to offer all they were and fall,
Not unavenged, on Anzac Beach, or dare
The deadly shell-swept ridge of Pozières,
What evil blight has settled like a pall
Upon thine honour, smirching all the fame
Of glory won, and earning thee the name,
Of shirker nation, selfish and afraid ?
For ease and safety in our neighbour's need,
For bodies scatheless while our brothers bleed,
Too sore, too vast a price by thee is paid.

1918

A WOMAN'S CALL

O BROTHER, will you go for me,
To fight our country's foe ?
The call has come across the sea ;
O brother, will you go ?

For we are women, boys, and old,
We do but what we can ;
A soldier's sword we cannot hold,
We look to you—a man.

For home, for honour, and for right,
We bid you strike a blow ;
To save us from the foeman's might,
O brother, will you go ?

The men you knew fought side by side,
They did what men can do ;
On Anzac Beach they fought and died,
And now they call for you.

And will you shame both them and me
By fear to face the foe ?
The call is ringing o'er the sea
O brother, will you go ?

1916

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTENDOM

With anguish torn, by shame o'erborne,
The fountain of her weeping dry,
O'erwhelmed with scorn, of hope forlorn,
O Christ, for Christendom we cry.

Of old Thy fame, Peace-lover, came
To those that now with fury vie ;
Thy Holy Name is crowned with shame—
O Christ, for Christendom we cry.

By faces pale, by eyes that fail,
By faint, last groans of those that die,
By war's grim roll, by woman's wail,
O Christ, for Christendom we cry.

By bloody raid, by murdered maid,
By men who own no human tie,
By hate repaid, by souls afraid,
O Christ, for Christendom we cry.

Break Thou the sword, the wrath outpoured,
Appease with Thine own "It is I."
O God adored, O regnant Lord,
O Christ, for Christendom we cry.

1916

1918

"Though I am sometime afraid, yet put I my trust in Thee."

We are but human if sometimes we fear,
When flaming war blood-dripping hurtles past,
And ancient empires crash in ruin vast ;
When long-dead devils rise, and point, and jeer
And mock man's madness with triumphant
leer ;
When all hell's powers upspued from underground
Confuse the sight, and right with wrong con-
found,
And seem to grow the mightier year by year.

In God alone poor human hope is stayed ;
In Him alone entrenched and undismayed ;
His will nor man nor devil can withstand.
Unseen His hosts, full armed, are watching near,
Nor life nor death can pluck us from His hand,
Though earth should shrivel, when those hosts
appear.

1918

HOLY WEEK: 1918

To this the world has come. This Holy Week,
When God made proof of love supreme, and
Christ

With shame and death as man for man made
tryst,

Man slays and slays his brother, while the reek
Of poison-gas pollutes the air : the meek
Are trampled in the mire, and foulest wrong
Becomes true right if championed by the strong,
Nor is there light to see for those who seek.

O Christ, have pity on Thy creature man ;
Give death, if death Thou wilt, but 'ere the
night

Make bare Thine arm and vindicate the right.
Purge, if Thou wilt, with Thy tremendous fan
Earth's threshing-floor, foul since the world began,
But, rising, open heaven and give us light.

1918

BELGIUM

AND so, amid the crash of giant shells
And blasting breath of household fires
Thou fallest, Belgium, struck at last to death.
Beneath the dust of Antwerp's spires.

In vain, with none to help, thou didst essay
To stem the fierce oncoming flood :
In vain, to save the honour of their land
Thy sons have drenched it with their blood.

In vain ? Ah, no ! Through all the storied years
Shall ever stand their glorious name,
For that one deed of never-dying worth
Emblazoned on the roll of fame.

The victor fought in boundless lust of power
For lands and gold and battle pride.
Thou gavest all thou hadst lest unaware
A friend be smitten through the side.

Thy name shall always touch our souls with fire,
And nerve our arms with courage high
To conquer in the long-drawn strife of life
Or, with no lesser faith, to die.

1914

THE POOR WORLD'S CRY

“ O God, and are Thine eyes grown dim,
And is Thy Throne so far on high,
Thou canst not see the flash of swords
Thou canst not hear the poor world's cry ?

“ And must we still go blindly on,
In darkness till the last black hour,
And sacrifice our hearts' desire
To these new gods of blood and power ?

“ Art Thou the Judge of all the world,
When nations cry for help in vain,
When lust and ravin claim the earth,
And tyrants wade through blood to reign ? ”

“ And who art thou of yesterday,
That judgest My eternal plan,
Who deemest God too far to feel
The pity and the wrath of man ?

“ Art thou too loving for this world
And comes it nigh to break thy heart ?
Canst thou abhor this hour like Me,
Who gave thee all thou hast and art ?

“ If thou hast sorrow what have I,
 Whose love is as the heavens to thine ?
 The burden is too great to share,
 The judgment and the end are Mine.”

“ My God, forgive ! I know Thee true :
 Although Thou slay me I will trust.
 Behold I have not anything,
 Behold my life is wind and dust.

“ And yet, O Lord, with hope deferred
 The weary heart grows cold and numb.
 How long, O patient God, how long
 Wilt Thou not rend the heavens and come ? ”

“ Thou criest like a foolish child
 That trembles in his father's arms,
 Be still My son ; thou hast to-day ;
 And trust Me for to-morrow's harms.

“ For should I slay thee it is well.
 I see the whole and not the part.
 Or dost thou love the world so well.
 Thou dost prefer it to My Heart ? ”

“ My God, I have none other hope,
 Destroy this traitor me in me ;
 And take Thou all I have of mine,
 That I may live, and live in Thee.”

“ My child, I grant thee of My love,
For Me to suffer to the end.
But for how long thou shalt not know
Yet greatly since thou art My friend.”

1916

THE ADVENTURE

ONCE on the slope of the ice-ridge,
 In the roar of the falling snow ;
Once in the pause of the fever,
 When the light of the lamp sank low ;

Once when the water-bag wilted,
 In the midst of the Deadman's Plain ;
Once when the whizz of the arrows
 Smote the camp in the dawn like rain ;

Twice in the green, tumbling water,
 With a sob of the bubbling breath ;
Once from the heels of my horses,
 I have look'd on the face of death.

Burdened with age and its weakness,
 Of the savour of life bereft,
Ever I strive to prepare me
 For the one great adventure left.

Whither at last will it lead me ?
 And in what shall my travelling end ?
Question all questions transcending,
 Whence all hoping and fear depend !

Death, irresistibly final,
Bids the curtain of darkness fall :
What, if relentlessly silent,
It should be but the end of all !

Will, paradoxical always,
In the future the past appear,
Dogging and shaping our living
Till we murmur "No change is here ? "

Passing the portals of darkness
Shall I waken to nameless fears,
Hopeless and terrified groaning,
And the gnashing of teeth, and tears ?

Trembling and half-understanding,
Shall I waken to cleansing fires,
Feeling their keenness no torment
In the purging my soul desires ?

Finally, what if as children
After terror of night's alarms
Wake in a measureless wonder
To the dawn and their mother's arms,

So should I wake from death's darkness
With amaze at the road I trod,
Joyous and filled beyond measure
With the fathomless peace of God !

Firmly, as bent on adventure,
I will strive to my latest breath,
Then yet again without trembling
I may look on the face of death.

1915

LABOUR

O BROTHER men, who toil in sweat of brow,
Ye neighbour men, whoe'er ye be,
Drivers of ox or chisel, pen or plough
Life venturers by land or sea :

Ye miners 'mid the fumes of stifling drives
Who shift by shift with powder shock
And panting blow and foul-air shortened lives
Wring out its treasure from the rock ;

Ye men who watch the bellowing cattle's rush
In darkness and in weariness,
And note in deep midsummer's deathlike hush
The precious flock grow daily less,

Who fell red cedar and tall kauri pine,
And saw great boards within the pit,
And clear the scrub from root and tangled vine
And frame the hut with adze and bit :

And burn great stumps and plant the corn
And watch it wither, scald and blight,
And plant and plant, and ere the dawn
Must rise to labour until night :

Ye lumpers, yellowed by the blazing flare,
Within the steamer's gloomy waist,
Who strive with ready hook and shoulders bare
To match the clanking engine's haste :

Ye seamen toiling on the billow's crest,
And roused by ever new alarm,
And snatching hard and duty-broken rest
E'en in the harbour's hard-earned calm :

Ye toiling women too o'er all the land
Who tend the kine or hoe the ground,
Or aid the toiling man with patient hand,
With household cares encompassed round :

Ye others, too, whose work is never done,
Who sigh for eight-hours bills in vain,
Your labour ends not with the set of sun
Who toil with head and weary brain :

The clerk, with fingers cramped and dazzled eyes,
Who cons the ledger's dreary page,
And toils all day and half the night, and tries
To keep his place and scanty wage :

The doctor waking at the sick man's call,
Intent to parry death's keen sword,
Obedient to the hasty needs of all
And knowing often no reward :

The parson, butt of every thoughtless fool
 Who knows not faith can pierce the sky,
 And school proud spirits to their Master's rule
 Of humbleness and charity :

The merchant giving, spite his insight keen,
 To workless men that cannot pay,
 And boasting not of good deeds done unseen,
 And widows helped upon their way :

The man in speech and politics and trade
 So oft misunderstood and cursed,
 Who seeks in truth his fellow men to aid
 And seeking good is named the worst :

Ye toil when burns the noonday overhead,
 Ye toil when sinks the sun to rest,
 Ye toil when flames the East with morning red,
 Ye toil and toiling ye are blest.

God's blessing rests on work, on sloth His ban
 Who ever worketh day and night :
 From out of labour grows the perfect man
 Advancing ever towards the light.

Deep hid the goal to which our labours tend,
 And therefore dimly understood,
 But human life grows grander towards its end,
 God's hidden aim is highest good.

SAND

My God, I am as sand ;
Of weakness, hid or known,
 Convicted if men mock ;
Yet have I heard that sand
By pressure may grow stone :
 Make Thou my sand Thy rock.

1909

A PRAYER

TAKE me and rack with pain,
Remove my heart's desire,
So that Thou lift me higher
And make me Thine again.

Take me and purge with fire ;
So that Thou draw me nigher
No anguish smites in vain.

1909

THE HILL OF LIFE

THE hill of life is steep, and they that climb
Have need of sinew strong and deep-drawn
breath

And eye alert, stout arm and courage true,
But more than all they need the kindly word,
The full deep heart of sympathy, the wit
That knows the time to speak, the time to cease ;
The love that flies not with the flight of years,
But ever grows more deep, more calm ; the smile
That comes not with the hour's content, but
springs

Deep-seated from the tranquil depths of trust,
As in a well the clear, cold water rests,
Updrawn at noon God's gift to weary men :
And these are thine to give or to withhold.

Under the fierce sun toiling at noonday,
Walking the forest weird in the moon ray ;
Tossed on the angry breast of the ocean,
Glad with the horses' freedom and motion ;
Watching the sunset's glory and wonder,
Hearing the rattle and roll of the thunder ;
Catching the gleam of the snow on the
mountain,
Resting awhile by the spray of the fountain ;

Now in the world's busy turmoil and bustle,
Far from the woods' soft tremulous rustle ;

Aiming and hoping with constant endeavour,
Working a work, not dreaming for ever ;
Strive we as sister, strive we as brother,
Bearing the burdens, helping each other.

The hill of life is steep, but here and there
We rest awhile, and looking backward see
The valleys and the lowlands shimmering soft,
With trim green meadows and cool coppice shade,
And glint of silvery river, and the smoke
That marks the quiet homestead's dreamy calm,
And then we turn and gaze with shaded eye
To where against the sky the summit gleams
Sharp, white and clear with an eternal rest ;
And so we smile nor speak but grasp our staff,
And rising meet the breeze from off the snow,
And all our caring for the valley flies,
And in our veins the blood runs fast and strong,
And near appears the crowning snow ; the air
Is full of visions and the upward rush
Of unseen comrades. Yet the top is far ;
How far who knows ? and yet we nearer come
And braver is the air, the sun more bright
And all the world more fair.

PILGRIMS

PILGRIMS here and heavy laden,
Still we toil with weary feet,
Till the paths of time converging.
Meet before God's mercy seat.

1891

I CANNOT SEE

I CANNOT see
What there can be,
That God can trace
In one so base
As me for Him to love.

Yet this I know,
Though I be low,
That He doth bend
To be my friend,
And speak of things above.

And I do fear,
When He is near,
To call His name
For very shame
Of my unlovingness.

Yet He doth say,
“ If thou wilt pray,
Thou shalt be strong ;
It is not long
And I do wait to bless.

“ Why turn aside ?
 Why try to hide ?
 For all thy heart,
 And all thou art
 To Me is manifest.

“ Come near and see
 My love for thee :
 O be not blind,
 And thou shalt find
 In Me eternal rest.”

And so I come,
 Though I be dumb,
 And cannot speak,
 For I am weak,
 My soul’s deep penitence.

In faith I wait
 And leave my fate,
 Within His hands,
 Who understands
 The why of sin and whence.

Put Thou away
 From me this day
 The world’s desire,
 And passion’s fire
 And all that doth offend.

I CANNOT SEE

O hear my prayer,
O deign to spare ;
Take all that's mine,
And claim as Thine
The soul Thou didst befriend.

1897

MEANS AND ENDS

WHEN first we feel the soul's true life,
The deeper effort, nobler strife,
There grows within a purpose strong
To fight the world, to right the wrong.

We frame before ourselves an end,
To which our lives perforce must bend ;
By it we weigh the more or less,
And judge our failure or success.

By painful slow degrees we find
It is not ours to loose and bind ;
And that results in part or whole
Are just what we do not control.

Until at length the truth we learn
That means, not ends, are our concern :
Our praise the doing not the deed,
Not ours the harvest but the seed.

And so when all is dark we smile,
Undaunted though we fail awhile ;
We are content to work and be,
And leave it to our God to see.

1897

“ QUI BENE SCIT PATI ”

To feel our prime, our flower of life, so long,
So strongly held within the hand of God,
That we must stand from out life's busy throng,
And walk not in the path we fain had trod ;

To but receive when we so long to give,
To rest all dumb when that we burn to speak,
To lie apart while others work to live,
And that we may be strong to be so weak :

This is the burden laid on those that love,
Whom Christ can trust to suffer through and
through ;
To wait with patient eyes that plead above
For time of strength, for time to rise and do.

1894

FORTEZZA ED UMILITADE E LARGO CORE

IN every act, in all resolves be strong,
Do all thou dost with all thy might,
Whate'er the odds fight manfully, fight long,
For God, for others, and for right.

Be humble ; arm and will are not thine own ;
The chalice thou and not the wine ;
A grace divine thou bearest, but alone
Canst naught for others' good nor thine.

Be very large thy heart, since thou art small
And knowest little, right or wrong ;
While God is great and in His heart are all ;
Be humble, therefore, kind and strong.

1896

“ GUARDA E PASSA ”

WHAT time the deathless poet traversed hell,
And saw each anguished shade and heard each
cry ;

On patient ears their tales of sorrow fell,
Nor passed he careless any sufferer by.

Save only those who in the limbo dwell
Of base inaction, duller than the clod,
Cold men that neither foully lived nor well,
Whom neither devil owns as his nor God.

Through these damned souls in utter heedless
scorn

His downward path the strong-souled poet
took ;

To bolder sinners turned his visage worn,
Nor spake one word nor named them in his
book.

1895

SI VENIAT

GONE is the prophet, silent the seer,
Voice cannot utter, ear cannot hear,
Heart is waxed gross, and eye cannot see,
Stubborn our fathers, stubborn are we,
O si veniat, Christ the true Word !

Stark is the world power, cruel the foe,
Feeble the true folk, feeble and slow,
Proud are the scorner, lusty and strong
Weary our fighters waiting so long,
O si veniat, Christ the sharp Sword !

Scattered the children, faithful but few,
Many the false gods flouting the true.
Guide of the wanderer, Ender of night,
Heavenly Day-spring, Fountain of light,
O si veniat, Christ the one Lord !

1895

ÆSCHYLUS

THRUST out a bow-shot from the Cape,
Where unseen reef-teeth interlock,
Like lonely sentinel it stood,
A grimly rugged storm-swept rock.

Around its summit hung a crown
Of snowy fowl that rose and fell,
With wailing music manifold
Far floating o'er the ocean swell.

Beneath the dark crag's beetling head
Blue-black the lapping waters played
Anon with purple interweaved,
And sheen of amethyst and jade ;

Till seaward all the gleam was lost
In one great blaze of dazzling light,
And all the ocean seemed one shield
Of molten sunlight infinite.

Anon the heavens grow dark, the sea
A weird and dull oppression feels ;
The clouds, red, throbbing nearer roll
Their heavy thundering chariot wheels.

The swelling surge with swift advance
And sullen seething seeks its prey,
The hungry billows leap and writhe
And break in hissing showers of spray.

And now from ocean's gloomy depths
Upheaving slow their angry crest,
Great rollers launch their hideous shock
Against the rock's enduring breast.

With sudden flashing trenchant blade
The lightning smites his crags amain ;
The storm wind shrieks with mocking blast
And pelts his face with stinging rain.

So didst thou stand, great Æschylus,
Spurning the path where dull men plod,
Amid the seething tide of life
A steadfast pillar set by God.

1892

MACHÆRUS

Stood of old Machærus castle
Glancing o'er the sunlit wave,
Sheer upsprang each glittering rampart,
Shone each marble architrave.

Marble terrace silken-shaded
Hanging o'er the deep abyss
Where the streams of Callirrhoe,
Wreathed in vapour, seethe and hiss,

Wafting upward scents of willow,
Calamus and sycamine,
Mixed with fragrant oleander,
Palm and gourd and trailing vine.

Pillared halls inlaid with jasper,
Where 'mid fountains' airy play
Costly myrtles waved their branches
Dripping dank with cooling spray,

Deep beneath a narrow dungeon,
Barred with many a massive door,
Where the drip of oozing waters
Trickled o'er the slimy floor.

Where the free air of the desert
Died away in clammy steam,
And the sunlight drooping westward
Faintly spent its dying beam.

Paced the halls an idle monarch,
Watched the glancing waters play,
Listening to a prophet's warnings
Wiled away a summer day.

Caged below, forlorn and friendless,
Pined the desert's dauntless son,
Speaking truth and vice rebuking,
Suffering till his work was done.

Gone is now the lofty castle,
Herod lives in this alone ;
But the prophet's fearless courage
Consecrates each mouldering stone.

THE ISLE OF THE DEAD

*On a very small island off Port Arthur, Tasmania, are 1600 graves,
the free on the ridge above, the convicts below.*

DARK isle of peace, where dead men sleep,
From life's long torment now set free :
How jewel-like thy shadows gleam
Set in the turquoise of the sea.

Where once man judged his fellow man
E'en in the refuge of their graves,
O'er broken stones the wild rose creeps
And in the breeze the bracken waves.

No more the weary clank of chains,
No more the clang of prison bell,
No more the warder's bloody lash,
No more the dark cell's gloom of hell.

On all alike with healing balm
Descends oblivion doubly blessed ;
None asks who sleeps beneath the sod,
Where lies oppressor or oppressed.

Father, forgive their foul offence,
Who lived and suffered long ago ;
Thy weeds are not more just than Thou
Nor to less lengths Thy mercies go.

The scarlet berries feed Thy birds,
The sea reflects the heaven above,
The graves' green grasses herald spring,
The breezes whisper of Thy love.

Shall not Thy mercy think on man,
Of all Thy works the last, the best,
And from the very dust of death
Bring him to everlasting rest ?

1912

IN THE DESERT

COULD I but reach that gully. There perchance
Some precious drops of water linger yet
To save my wretched soul from blank despair.
O God! what nameless miseries have I borne
In this wild search for gold. How long has passed
Since that last fall that left me maimed and
faint,

Horseless and hopeless in the wilderness ?
Three days ? or hours ? I know not ; such wild
dreams

Confound my aching senses. Yet I've crawled
In racking pain for weary endless miles,
Or was it only yards ? I cannot think.
My brain is whirling with the cruel glare,
Ten thousand curses on this blinding sun !
But water ! for one drop before I die
I'll brave again the agonizing road.

Dry ! dry ! dry ! only dryness everywhere !
No hope, no hope ! come madness and despair !
Come death ! come—stay, perchance beneath
the sand

Some moisture lingers ; with my hands I'll dig
To find beneath my life or know my doom.

No water ! but what's this—the wash—and gold !

Gold ! and for this I've staked my hopes, my health

For this I crushed the pleadings of my soul,
Hardened my heart, and slew my better self,
For this—and now I'd give it, every ounce,
Yea all the gold on earth, for one cool draught
To slake my raging fever. All the past
Rises unbidden now before my eyes.

Fool, fool ! I see it all : those wasted years ;
Neglected duties ; all that might have been ;
My craving thirst for gold, my mad pursuit :
Gone health and hope and peace, and in my hand
I grasp the long-sought treasure, but to mock
My utter ruin. Ah those words of old—
“ His soul's exchange : what shall one give ? ”
and I,

Have sold myself like black Iscariot,
And here's my curse. O God be merciful !
My throat is parched. I know not how to pray.

AGONIÆ

HE suffers and I sit at ease ;
I work my daily work ; I eat
My daily bread ; I break my jest
And laugh with those that laugh ; I mourn
With sorrow-burdened hearts, as if
Their grief concerned me, not my own.
Thus day by day I eat and sleep,
An actor to myself, nor show
The surging grief that throbs within
The chafing bonds of faith and trust
That hold me here.—Were I but free !
I'd break through chains of adamant
Did they but tie my body, but
The soul is held by sterner bonds—
O God, bind them yet closer, lest
I strive against Thy holy will
And fall for ever.—
He suffers and I here ! I here,
And he my dearer self, more dear
Than life, is moaning out my name !
O for one hour to clasp that hand,
To cool that burning brow, to speak
Those words—he suffers and I here,
He suffers and—what can I do ?

O God, forgive my faithlessness !
I can do all things since Thou art
My friend ; his love Thy gift, my love
Faint shade of Thine, from whence it sprang.
O Father, infinite in love,
Depth beyond depth of tenderness,
I trust him utterly to Thee,
Do Thou forgive my frantic haste,
My love forgetful of its source,
Which dares with rash, intruding hand
To drive Thee from his side, for Thou
Canst soothe his aching soul, whilst I
Can only weep and wring my hands.
Fool that I was to turn Thy gift
Against the Giver. O, my God,
Do Thou not leave him for my sin.
O let me bear alone the pain
Of my own faithlessness. Take him
And with Thine own hand comfort him
For life or death, for joy or pain
I trust him to Thee utterly.
O make me very patient, so
That in Thine own good time I may
With humbler service satisfy
My heart's great longing, and complete
Thy will.

DE PROFUNDIS

FROM out the deep ; ah God, how deep
The anguish of my soul !
While round my heart, above my head,
The cold, cold waters roll.

From out the deep where none can see,
Where sad souls stoop and grope ;
When all is gone, Almighty God,
I cry to Thee for hope.

That I have loved the true, the good,
But damns my soul the more.
I own it best ; my sins confess,
Yet taste sin's acrid core.

Thy way is sweet, Thy pardon peace,
But I forget, forget ;
And in a net whose end is death
My foolish feet are set.

I dare not doubt that one so foul
Thou must, alas, disown ;
Thy law is sweet ; and I must reap
As I, poor fool, have sown.

Yet didst Thou die, God's Son, that I
 Might live, and live to Thee :
 Give me Thy life, O give me sight,
 Thyself, Thy love to see.

O, I am vile ! I have no right
 To touch Thy sacred feet,
 Yet I am bold to sigh and hope
 Before Thy mercy seat.

I do not beg to find my rest
 Within thy glorious heaven ;
 I only pray a sign to gain
 That I may die forgiven.

And yet no sign would I require.
 O lift my heart above ;
 Let it be mine to fight my fight,
 And trust but to Thy love.

From out the deep to Thee I plead,
 O God, my God, to Thee ;
 From man's vain help, from mine own self,
 To Thee alone I flee.

WAITING

WHEN shall I win thee,
 Haven of rest,
Guerdon of weary souls
 Doing their best ?

Seeking a fleeting goal,
 Half understood,
Sorely bewildered
 Hope I for good.

Tired of earnest words
 Spoken in vain,
Weary of error crushed
 Rising again.

Thy will be done, Lord,
 Though it be hard ;
Not before duty done
 Cometh reward.

Not till the rounds pass
 Cometh relief ;
Waiting is blessed
 When Thou art Chief.

Pardon if now and then
 Softly I cry,
“ Cometh the hour yet ?
 Lord, is it nigh ? ”

Willing the spirit,
 But flesh is weak,
Else had impatience
 Not dared to speak.

Lord, in Thine own time
 Come Thou to me,
Lord, in Thine own time
 Bid come to Thee.

All that Thou doest,
 Lord, is done well ;
Lifted to heaven or
 Cast down to hell,

Still would I trust Thee,
 Still would I love
Thee, Lord, Who reignest
 In heaven above.

PATIENCE

WHEN with heavy, languid life
 The pulse beats slow,
When the pain-throbs sicken as
 They come and go.

When the letters blind and mock
 The tired eyes,
When desponding memories
 Uncalled arise.

When we feign a zeal we should,
 But do not feel ;
When we face each wonted task
 With flagging zeal ;

When the joyous wings of hope
 Are stiff and cold ;
When the evil bats of doubt
 Their vanes unfold,

Then, O God, we need Thy help
 Above all needs ;
Then to Thee with strong appeal
 Our weakness pleads.

All our pain we cannot voice,
Our vague unrest ;
Longing for we know not what
Of worst or best.

But to Thee the whole is known
The one white end,
Where the scattered rays of life
Together blend.

Give us patience strong to bear
Whate'er shall be ;
Give us faithfulness to wait
In faith to see.

Till at length Thy pitying arms
Our spirits take,
And the everlasting dawn
Unhasting break.

1899

LIFE

With song or sigh life hurries by,
A vast, resistless river,
And on its breast ungarnered die
The days of God the Giver.

The days of gold, the days of old,
The days of perfect beauty :
Within the grasp of all that hold
The steadfast path of duty.

They pass and fade. Our choice is made ;
We scorn the world's vain treasure,
And then for peace or bread we trade
The joy that knows no measure.

" Alas, to-day," we sadly say,
" To-morrow shall be better,"
And soon to-morrow is to-day,
And still we are its debtor.

All are not past. Take heart at last,
Sell this day for to-morrow.
And God thy Trust shall hold thee fast
In sunshine and in sorrow.

The morning light shall glad thy sight,
And noon on noon shed glory;
At eventime it shall be light,
Day tell to day its story

Of conflicts done, of victories won,
Of powers of hell unseated,
Till thou shalt rest, thy race well run,
Thy task by God completed.

Where all thy days shall ring with praise
Of Him Who earthward bending,
The lost to find, the poor to raise,
Is God of Gods unending.

1903

THE TIME IS SHORT

WATCHED I once the sun descending,
Watched it glow, flash and fade,
Drank its glory sight transcending
Till a voice, warning, said :

“O'er the track the stars are gleaming,
Far away still is home,
Time is all too short for dreaming,
Come away, comrade, come.”

Dazzled with the joy of being,
Feast of life, flush of love,
All enthralled was I with seeing ;
Spake a voice from above :

“Life is all too short for gazing ;
Quit the masque, cease to play ;
Night advances soul-amazing,
Let us work while 'tis day.”

1899

THE LONELY PRIEST

ALONE, my God, on this Thy Holy Day

Within Thy House I stand Thy name to bless,
Who am no God but only human clay,
Not made to rest unmoved in loneliness.

For some had business that they might not leave,

And some had meant to come but have forgot,
And some, who wish it, dare not yet believe,
And some, alas ! there are, who love Thee not.

And some must tarry with their wives at home,

And some have friends to whom respect is due,
Some say they worship when abroad they roam,
Or shoot or fish or healthy sports pursue.

And so with one accord excuse is made

And I am here in church, my God, alone,
And since much loneliness doth make afraid
I cast myself before Thy altar prone.

O God of glory infinitely bright,

O Love transcending all imagining,

O Perfect Patience, Who dost bear the slight
Of men too dull to feel their insult's sting.

Help me to bear the intolerable weight
Of all the prayer and praise that is not said,
To pray for those who fail, forget, or hate,
Until my soul shakes off this haunting dread.

How can I pray the old accustomed prayers
That were not made for one man's lips to sing ;
That need concordant voices, joyous airs,
And hearts uplifted till the rafters ring ?

My prayer falls silent from the echoing vault,
My psalm of triumph falters to a moan ;
My voice is thin as I confess "our" fault,
Thy blessings bless not, blessing me alone.

O God of pity, give Thy children light,
And lead them in their darkness till they see ;
O God of glory, give Thy people sight,
Until they fix their wandering eyes on Thee.

Forgive them for they know not what they do,
Nor how they wound the greatness of Thy
love,
They live without Thee though at heart still true;
My God, uplift them to the things above.

O wondrous sight ! the choir, the nave, the air,
Is full of shining forms, a glorious throng
Of white-robed Saints, Confessors, Angels fair
Who lift in joyous praise their holy song.

THE LONELY PRIEST

101

The vision passes ! Glory be to Thee,
Who teachest me I do not pray alone,
That thousands whom no earthly eye doth see
With me Thy name confess, Thy Glory own.

Yet cease I not Thy mercy to implore
For those I love, my people and Thy sheep ;
O lead them back to worship Thee once more,
To pray and praise and, if need be, to weep.

I am not worthy of Thy saintly band,
I only long with mine own folk to kneel,
With them once more within Thy House to stand,
With them Thy blessing on my head to feel.

1915

TO MOTHERS

O MOTHERS, holding in your arms,
The hope of happier days to come,
Amid the crash of war alarms
What primal instinct holds you dumb ?

O speak ! and bring us once again
The solace of the saner years,
Lest earth grow mad with all its pain
And all its hoping wane in tears.

O speak ! and for the children's sake,
The children that in pain you bore,
Bid men arise for shame and break
The chains of sin whose end is war.

The child you press against your heart
Is yours to make, is yours to mar,
And yours the power in whole or part
To shape its destiny afar.

For every hate and lust and greed,
Which makes a hell of earth to-day,
Within your child, like deadly weed,
May spring, unless you bar the way.

TO MOTHERS

103

But God within your hands doth place
A power greater than the sword,
To print upon your children's face,
The peace and goodness of the Lord.

You hold the keys of death and life,
Of hell, of hope, of liberty.
Arise and fight in noble strife
To save the world that is to be.

In Christ alone confusion dies,
In Him alone can warfare cease,
And in His vision of the skies
The tortured world at last find peace.

1917

THE ANNUNCIATION

“ HAIL, O Mary, full of grace,
Daughter true of David’s race,
Thou of women first and best,
Art beyond all others blest !
Fear not, thou shalt bear a Son,
Aided by the Holy One,
Greater than the greatest He
Son of God most High shall be ! ”
Thus the holy Angel said.
Blessed Mary bowed her head,
“ Lo the handmaid of the Lord ;
With His Word may all accord ! ”
So to hearts still undefiled
Comes the promise of a child,
Full of joy, akin to tears,
Full of hope, yet full of fears.
Happy she who answers still
“ Be it, Lord, at Thy sweet will ;
All I am to Thee I owe,
All Thy purpose Thou dost know.
What Thou givest to be mine,
May it ne’er be aught but Thine.
Be it good or be it ill,
Still be all at Thy sweet will.”

THE ANNUNCIATION

105

Holy Mary, taught by thee
Let us vain forebodings flee.
God is giving : fears must cease ;
In His will is perfect peace.

1918

FRIENDS OF BYGONE YEARS

O how soon you leave us,
Friends of bygone years,
Fail us and bereave us
Heeding not our tears.

Centred hope about you,
You were all our own.
What is life without you,
What is life alone ?

O how oft we vexed you
By our selfishness,
Puzzled and perplexed you
By unworthiness !

Now above the tissues
Of the world's deceit,
You behold its issues
Underneath your feet.

Now you rest, beholding
God in His own place,
Through the all-enfolding
Triumph of His grace.

Think of our poor stumbling
In the mirk world's mire,
Patient of our humbling
In temptation's fire.

Do not now forget us
In your purer air ;
In your loving let us
Have a little share.

Still we have you dwelling
Deep within our heart,
Still your love compelling
Plays on earth its part.

Does your love yet need us
E'en in heaven's rest ?
God in mercy lead us
To that haven blest.

TRUE LOVE

As the bird to the air, as the air to the wave,
 As the wave to the sunlit sea,
As the sea to the earth, as the earth to the sun ;
 So true is my love to thee.

1896

MARGARET

My years go by, go by with winged feet,
A little bitter and a little sweet.

Rue mixed with roses makes the fragrance more ;
God gives His gifts from out no niggard store.
Another year of joy and sorrow gone,
Revealing life the more as life goes on ;
Each day the stronger for the good we see,
The richer for the hope of what may be.

1898

TO M.E.W.

A FLOWER decks the meadow grass,
A gem the fisher's net :
In many tongues the sons of men
Have called them " Margaret."

The daisy woke the poet's song,
The pearl in crowns is set ;
But dearer far to loving hearts
The name of Margaret.

It speaks a fair and constant soul,
And love with loving met,
God's blessing hallow all thy days,
Our pearl, our Margaret.

1891

FAREWELL

FAREWELL, farewell ! Beloved soul, farewell !

The Master calls for thee, dear heart ;
With gentle touch He guides our lingering feet,
He guides our lingering feet apart.

Together, through the sunshine and the storm,

The dusty road of life we trod :
But we no more may be as we have been,
Since thou art leaving me for God.

Together have we gazed along the path,

Where I no longer may be nigh ;
But better guidance waits thee through that dusk,
Which deepens ere the shadows fly.

A little step, a little cry, a smile,

And thou shalt read God's secret plain ;

A little while of loneliness and loss,

And I shall see thy face again.

But thou, when God shall show thee all He is,

And all earth's jangling noises cease,

Wilt not forget that I have loved thee well,

Nor pass my trouble in thy peace.

FAREWELL

Farewell, farewell ! Beloved soul, farewell !

I know, sweet heart, 'tis but a while :
 I dare not grieve while thou art calm and glad,
 And hast for death thine own true smile.

I, too, am strong that thou hast borne so well,
 And murmured not when God struck deep,
 But won the guerdon of those old sweet words,
 " He giveth His beloved sleep."

With unforced lips I greet thy smile with mine,
 I clasp thy fingers to the end ;
 With naught of dread or bitterness or blame
 We wait for death as for a friend.

Farewell, farewell ! Beloved soul, farewell !
 Behold the everlasting arms !
 Rest, rest for ever ! In our Father's house
 No sorrow pains, no fear alarms.

Night breaks in day,
 Rest, rest, rest !
 On our Father's breast
 Rest, rest for aye.

ON OUR MOTHER'S POCKET-BOOK

FRAIL book, by which alone we know
Our mother's inmost heart,
What strange, sweet comfort to our souls
Thy faded leaves impart !

Blest privilege with reverent eye
To scan thy pages through,
And think again the secret thoughts
Of her we dimly knew.

To guide the willing memory back
Through scenes that crowd apace,
And place before her children's eyes
The half-remembered face.

A face with lines of suffering worn,
Yet full of tender love ;
A voice that spoke of parting here
And quiet rest above.

In thee, dear book, her gentle voice
Still bids her children hear,
And learn how they may by her road
With her to Christ draw near :

114 ON OUR MOTHER'S POCKET-BOOK

By strictest check of selfish thoughts
May purify the soul ;
By self-denial stern may strive
To win the distant goal.

Those silent words can still prevail
To check each angry frown ;
And we with her may bear the cross,
With her may share the crown.

So may the children that she loved
All tread the path she trod,
And find in humbleness of heart
The peace she found with God.

1883

THE FAITHFUL PRIEST

A. E.

REST, rest my friend
This is the end
 Of human love.
The hours are fleet
Till we shall meet
 Again above.

O faithful priest,
From west to east
 Thy journeys ran ;
O'er range and plain,
In sun and rain,
 Thy mark a man.

In miners' camp
By rude slush lamp,
 Men saw thy face ;
Forgot to jeer,
And pressed to hear
 The word of grace.

THE FAITHFUL PRIEST

In shearing-shed
 The roughest said
 “ A man is by ; ”
 And every child
 Looked up and smiled
 And knew not why.

O faithful priest,
 To first or least,
 Thou wert the same.
 No greed of pelf,
 No thought of self
 Besmirched thy name.

The rest, the peace
 Where troubles cease,
 Has come to thee,
 And loss and grief
 And thy belief
 Are left to me.

Rest, comrade, rest ;
 Thy life was blest
 With gracious end ;
 With sacred rite,
 And wished-for sight
 And voice of friend.

No more can death,
With labouring breath,
 Torment thy breast.
Thy course is done,
Thy crown is won.
 Rest, comrade, rest.

1899

FLORENCE BUCHANAN, DEACONESS

THE earth to keep its best too little prone,
While yet for lesser things with longing faint,
Has rendered heedless back to God His own,
His best and greatest gift to man—a saint.

A few short years thou didst make glad our sight,
We saw the peace of God within thy face,
And then thy body, for this earth too slight,
Was broken in its all too rough embrace.

For God All Wise, for others' good, by pain
Did crush from thee the fragrance of true life ;
Smitten thou didst not feel the sword in vain,
No pang but helped another in his strife.

That we have loved thee makes us bow the head
With shame we are so little worthy thee ;
That thou lov'dst us a ray of hope doth shed
That God will see some good where thou didst
see.

FLORENCE BUCHANAN, DEACONESS 119

Beloved soul, we bid thee thus good-bye ;
May God Himself grant every joy divine,
And dry each tear with comfort from on high,
Till light eternal round thy pathway shine.

1914

IN MEMORIAM

F. HUEY, PRIEST

Died in his sleep, May 31, 1917

As from the depth, long lost to sight,
· The diver bursts with panting breath,
And holds against the morning light,
 The gem his cast has won from death,
So fought this man with choking pain,
 Nor thought of self, but saw his goal,
And plunged him in his work again,
 To win for God another's soul ;
But ere he rose behold the bands
 Were loosened and the soul was flown ;
An Angel took it from his hands,
 And smiling gave to God his own.

1917

DORMEUSE

From the French of Marceline Desbordes Valmore

BABY, sleep and see
How the tiny bee
With her honeyed task all done
Dances, dances in the sun.

To my baby's bed
Angels robed in red,
Never seen in broad daylight,
Come to wish him sweet good night.

If he is but good,
True to babyhood,
O'er him shall the Virgin blest
Bend and press him to her breast.

If he every day
Love me, God will say,
“I love little babes who sleep :
Give him golden dreams to keep.

“Gently kiss his head,
For his prayers are said,
Take and let him play for hours
In my garden gay with flowers.

DORMEUSE

“Hem him little bands
 With your angel hands ;
 On his pillow lest he frown
 Haste to rain your softest down.

“Give him little wings,
 Like the bird that sings.
 Set him radiant in my sun,
 Let him dance till sleep is done.

“On a cloud so high
 Bear him through the sky.
 Tell him softly that he may
 Drink from out my Milky Way.

“Let him rest his head
 In pearl and amber bed.
 See ye give him ere he wakes
 Of our choicest diamond cakes.

“On my azure sea
 Traveller let him be.
 Rail his ship with ivory bars,
 Broider on her sails my stars.

“Let my moonbeams fine
 On the waters shine.
 Let him even if he wish
 Catch my gold and silver fish.

“ But I will he sleep,
Swathed in slumber deep,
Quiet as the birds that rest
In their soft, warm, reedy nest.

“ For, if baby cry,
There’s a clock on high
Strikes alarm if baby do
That which God forbids him to.

“ All along the street,
People stay their feet,
When the clock breathes out its sigh,
Saying, ‘ Why did baby cry ? ’

“ And his mother dear,
Waking up in fear,
Hearing such a graceless thing,
Will no more to baby sing.

“ If he frets and cries,
Ere the red sunrise
This rebellious lamb perchance
May have vanished out of France.

“ Such a tiny mite
Through the ceiling quite
Could by crying might and main
Vanish ne’er to come again.

DORMEUSE

" Lonely would he roam
Sad and far from home ;
Never shall such baby be
In My paradise with Me."

But if he is good,
True to babyhood,
O'er him shall the Virgin blest
Bend and tell him all the rest.

1907

G O D

THE WORLD'S TRAGEDY

CAIAPHAS

"Of course the man means well! 'Tis ever such
That mar the statesman's well-weighed plans
the most!

But by what right does he, this Nazarene
Untaught and uncommissioned by the priests,
Presume to shape our nation's destiny,
A thing that in these strange and perilous times
Might daunt the wisest? But how to act's the
question!

'Tis useless to deny the miracles
So lately wrought—God only knows how done,
By secret art or evil spirit's aid,
If such there be, and he would stoop to them,
Which much I doubt. The man is honest,
Though a fool to meddle. Then he preaches
well:

Though fanatic and hostile to our caste
Is prophet-like, and puts to utter rout
Our subtlest scribes. If only he had been
School-taught and trained he might have done
our cause

Unheard-of service, gifted doubly thus.
But as it is the man must die; no less!

For either they will rise in vain revolt
Against our masters, heeding time nor place,
When, crushed beneath the iron heel of Rome,
We perish wholly, or if fanatic
In milder ways, yet taught by him the mob,
Dull, cursed beasts, will brook no more our rule,
Nor pay their tithe, nor worship any more
Here in the Temple, which they say he boasts
He could destroy and build with magic arts
Within three days. It is not like his wit
To talk such folly ; perhaps he was belied !
'Tis somewhat hard to slay a man, whose fault
Is too great zeal for what he thinks the good ;
But rulers may not pity ! After all
'Tis better one should for the people die
Than all the nation perish, or our Church
Become a chaos with its priests despised.
The council is as wax. I will away,
Will put them on the scent of blasphemy,
Then school them how to meeken Pilate, till
He bends his stubborn pride to do our will."

HEROD

"So, Rabbi, face to face at last ! Long time
I have desired to see thee here at court,
And watch thee do those wondrous works of
thine.
No doubt 'twas wise to start with country-
folk,
But if thou canst convince a town-bred man

(Grown somewhat sceptical I fear), why then
 A royal pardon and a king's reward !
 The first I fear thou needest if thou hop'st
 To save thy skin. What ! No reply ? I trust
 Thou art not stubborn as the Baptist was,
 Lest thou shouldst meet no better end than his,
 But he would preach an hour, and oft
 I near had set him free he touched my conscience
 so.

I am a Jew, good Rabbi, keep your scorn
 For heathen, as for me I worship God :
 And though perchance some breaches of the law
 Offend thee still, yet if I saw some deed
 Such as they say thou dost at will, somefeat
 Unseen since great Elijah's days, I might
 Repent in earnest, as I hope to do.
 Still silent ? 'Tis not meet to mock a king,
 As thou wilt find ere we have done with thee.
 'Tis vexing thus to lose a chance unique
 Of seeing, not some juggling sleight of hand,
 But real control of nature. I'll speak fair.
 We crave thy pardon, for a learned man
 Is mate for kings, and prophets rightly claim
 A due respect from all. We greatly grieve
 That by some blunder thou art here in bonds
 Who shouldest be an honour to our realm.
 A word in Pilate's ear and thou art free.
 I'll see those jealous priests molest thee not,
 And give thee pension and a place at court
 Or, if the country please thee, leave to roam,

And say a prayer for me from time to time ;
What sayst thou ? Nothing ? Bah ! he will not
speak,
I waste my time upon the stubborn fool.
Here, sergeant, take this would-be king of men,
And let the guard-room do him reverence ;
Then lead him back to Pilate with the thanks
Of Herod for his courtesy, and say
I deem the man is harmless, though a fool ;
Whate'er he does with him 'twill please me well
Who do desire to rank myself his friend.
Return, and how he answers let me know :
This trivial case may to some profit grow.”

PILATE

“ Truth ! What is truth ? If things were what
they seem
That fellow there might be some god come down,
If gods there be, so calm he stands and stern
Amid the crowds that jostle him and jeer.
Whatever is is true, and nothing else.
Fools ! can’t they see that he’s no common clown ?
I’ve seen the bravest blench at such a mob—
Nay, I myself—but there he stands alone
And not a gleam save wonder in his eye.
What if he knew ? But, bah ! I’m growing old ;
My golden pieces are a safer stay
Than all the dreamings of philosophers.
I wish I had a chance to let him go !

These hellhound priests have got me in a net.
 Our Flaccus said that justice must be done
 Though heaven should fall—He did not know the
 Jews.

Nor was Augustus like our gracious lord ;
 Another home appeal would ruin me.
 At any cost I must be safe ; yet why
 A second thought, 'tis but a peasant Jew,
 I've sentenced to the cross a dozen such
 Between a throw of dice, nor felt a qualm.
 But this man is not such, a king they say ;
 At least a man that's innocent of crime.
 I have not been a judge these years for naught.
 A kingly man, a wise philosopher,
 And yet I dare not loose him. Water, ho !
 I'll wash my hands before the multitude
 And lay his blood upon their villain heads
 That force me to 't. Yet but for Cæsar's wrath
 The fools should choke in other blood than his.
 Ah well ! I've done the best the times allow,
 And Cæsar is a god some people say.
 . . . I wish he'd turn his face away ! ”

JUDAS

“ He is condemned and I am traitor, damned
 Beyond redemption. Strange ! I had made sure
 He would have used His power to break the toils,
 Not yielded like a lamb to certain death.
 I thought to fool the priests and make Him take
 The place and rank His power had won for Him,

So sharing greater profits than I make.
The thirty pieces were but earnest small
Of what I hoped ; I have o'erreached myself.
He is condemned, Who called Himself my friend,
Who looked at me with such sad earnest eyes,
I scarce had heart to do it. Now He's gone.
The cunning priests will give Him scanty law,
And I am left to face the memory
Of all He was and all I might have been.
Those early days when I had sworn me true
To His ideal, sworn to care no more
For petty gains, but live and work and die
His true disciple, since He cared for me,
And showed me how I might retrieve the past,
And be His friend Who was so nigh to God !
Lost ! Lost ! Too late for pardon or for hope :
I have betrayed the blood of innocence.
His very foes will point the hand of scorn
Against the traitor, and I dare not meet
My old companions who would with me walk,
And speak with bated breath of Him Who was
God's very image on this sin-stained earth.
Lost ! Lost ! And lost for ever ! For my soul
Is dead, and if I might I would not pray.
Repent I cannot, and I dare not think.
Perchance 'tis false the spirit lives and knows
Beyond the grave, at least I'll find in death
Some change more welcome than hell-haunted
breath."

THE PEOPLE

“ They say he takes a stone and makes it bread
 And feeds therewith ten thousand hungry men.
 The very graves will open at his word.
 No honest man could do such mighty deeds,
 Unless befriended by Beelzebub.”

“ He is of Galilee, shall he compare
 With citizens of great Jerusalem ? ”

“ They say that he doth boast himself a king :
 A man no better clad than you or me.
 Away with such a fellow from the earth ! ”

“ ’Tis said the Galilean dares to say,
 He will destroy God’s Temple here
 Within three days unless they make him king.”

“ An evil man, my friends, and blasphemous,
 He holds the sabbath but a common day,
 And mocks at Moses’ self and God’s own Law.”

“ The great Messias, whom God quickly send,
 To rid us of these cursed Roman swine,
 Shall come with trumpet swell and clash of arms,
 Not poor and helpless as a fettered sheep.”

“ He mocks us there as if our proper king
 Were such a wretch. Away with him ! Away ! ”

“ ’Tis but five days ago he entered town
 With shouts of joy and blessings on his name.

I shouted with the rest, for sure, I thought,
 He will be king and drive our foes away ;
 But nothing came ; he only talked and taught,
 And so I saw I had been fooled ; that's why
 I shout to-day : 'Away ! And crucify ! '

"The Feast ! Release a captive for the Feast !
 No one shall rob us of our rights ! Release ! "

"Be silent, friends, the Governor would speak."

"A priest bade cry Barabbas, him that hates
 The Romans he bids pay the tribute to."

"No ! Give Barabbas. He's an honest Jew !
 No devil's agent like that fellow there."

"Barabbas ! No ! Barabbas ! Crucify !
 Let go Barabbas ! Let the other hang !
 Not this man but Barabbas ! Crucify ! "

"Yes, yes upon our heads his blood shall lie,
 Ours and our children's. Slay him ! Crucify ! "

CHRIST

"Jerusalem ! O thou Jerusalem,
 That dost thy prophets slay, and greet with
 stones
 The messengers in mercy sent to thee,
 How oft would I have gathered in thy sons,
 As doth a hen her chickens 'neath her wing,
 But still ye would not. So behold your house

Is left unto you desolate for aye.
I am the shepherd good and true. My sheep
Do know My voice, a stranger know they not.
The shepherd for his sheep doth give his life :
And other sheep I have, them must I bring,
Till all become one fold and all one flock.
For I, if I be lifted up, will draw
All nations unto Me. The prophets old
Rejoiced to see My day. They saw it, and
Were glad. Before that Abraham was I am.
A King ? Thou sayest it. I am a King,
But not from hence My Kingdom ; if it were
My friends would fight and save Me from the
Jews.
Think'st thou I could not to My Father pray
And He would straightway send an angel host
Twelve legions strong : But how accomplish thus
The Scriptures, which declare the Son of Man
Must suffer and be crucified and rise
The third day from the dead ? Behold, I come
To do Thy will, O God ! Thy will be done !
I came to save men's lives, to free the bound,
To heal the sick, to bind the broken heart,
To seek Mine own, but they receive Me not :
To save from sin a world of sin. My God !
Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

GETHSEMANE

THE cedars cast a shadow sharp and black,
The moonlight shivers on the chilly grass,
An awful silence rests upon the place.
The very air, presentient of doom,
Doth hush the sobbing cedar tops, that bend
In dreadful expectation. Suddenly
A human cry doth quiver through the heart
Of listening nature, lost alone on man ;
The wind went shuddering on his way : the trees
Shook all their leaves in sorrow impotent :
The men a moment stirred them in their sleep,
And then forgot and all was still.

1888

DWELLER IN LIGHT

DWELLER in Light inaccessible, Thou
God the All-Holy, Ancient of Days !
Infinite, Incomprehensible, One ;
Thou Whom Archangels tremble to praise,
Blindly I trust Thee, cling to Thy love.
Earth may reel and the heavens depart,
Thou reignest alone in the universe,
Hope of the humble and contrite in heart.

1892

EASTER NEWS

“ It is done ! It is done ! Cry ‘ The triumph
is won

And the gate has been opened at last !’
So let every man shout, let the trumpet ring out,
For death and destruction are past.

“ No more need we shrink on the terrible brink,
For a Man has been found to go through,
What the world in its pain has long hoped for
in vain

Has been proved by His deed to be true.”

“ But of whom do ye cry ? Where’s a champion
so high,
Such a mighty deliverer of men ?
Is he God ? Is he man ? That he will and he can,
Drag the foe of our race from his den ? ”

“ He is God ! He is man ! He both will and He
can,
For He came from the sky for our sake,
And the bonds hath He burst of our foeman
accurst
And the bars of our grave will He break.”

“ But for me and for thee what result can there be
From a hero so great from His birth ?
Or what share can we claim in His deed and
His fame
Who are less than the dust of the earth ? ”

“ He is mine, He is thine ? Though His race be
divine
Yet His heart is the heart of a man :
For He opened a way when He shared in our
clay,
And He loves us as He alone can.

“ So let every man shout ! Let the trumpet
ring out !
He has freed us from hell, death, and sin !
Fling ye open the gate lest the Conqueror wait,
That the Lord of all life may come in.”

FOR WHIT-SUNDAY

ETERNAL Spirit of our God, Who o'er the primal
night

Didst brood portentous and with tenderest care
From out the rude, dull chaos didst evolve
The ordered plan of earth and sea and air ;
Who in the greatness of Thy love didst solve
The problem of creation, so that all
The creatures breathed one spirit, each to each
Mysteriously adapted, ere our fall
Marred that sweet harmony that Thou didst
teach,

Marred but not broke, for how can evil crush
Thy purposes of good ? The generous sun
Still warms the pulse of earth ; through the lush
Green meadows, down the hillsides, down the
dun

Gaunt moors a living colour yearly springs
That mates his evening glory ; still the snow,
Spreads her warm mantle o'er the tender things
That fear the frosts of winter ; still the low
Deep boom of ocean thunders on the shore,
Thunders and stays. Through all the universe
Is an unceasing order such as Thou,
Eternal Wisdom, didst create, no more

To change till all be glorified ; but now
A mightier task awaits Thee. From our soul
Thine own sweet harmony is gone, and all
Our nature passed away from that great whole,
Which Thou didst make to scattered parts that
call

One this way, one another, and that cord
Which ought to vibrate to Thine every touch
Is all untwisted, and doth own for lord
As many masters. Help us, we are most
Bestraitened, scarcely dare we pray to Thee,
To mend Thy broken instrument. Thou didst
bring

Life, love and harmony from out the sea
Of darkest chaos. Help Thou man—a thing
Most pitiable. We have sinned a sin
Most grievously against Thee, who did leave
Our only Healer ; yet there lies within
One strand of love. Good Spirit, take and weave
Into that one our fallen nature, so
That purified by Thine own healing pain,
We may be brought at length to know
The joys of peace restored, and yet again,
As when unfallen, to Thine impulse move
Harmonious, stronger as the more we see,
Clear-eyed at length by Thine unwearied love,
Our only Healer, Guide and Lord in Thee.

MELCHIOR

THE night was keen. Some hours the crescent moon

Had sunk beneath the mountain, cold and clear.
No sign as yet ; no sound besides the howl
Of prowling jackal ; still he standeth there,
And gazeth ever westward, save at times
A glance that scans the zenith, then again
More keenly gazes westward. What a face !
Not old, but drawn with silent working thought,
And long night-watchings with the awful stars :
What knowledge-hungry eyes ! What eager lips
That murmur " Still it comes not : yet the word
Is sure, the signs convergent to this hour.
No sign, no light, and yet it must be near.
Our mountain prophet, ere he bartered truth
For gold and vengeance did foretell it thus ;
And thus our studies tell us light must come
To herald Light. O favoured age, when truth
Shall reign on earth and sacred peace begin.
No sign ! and yet He cannot lie, that great
Light-Father Who doth shine on us through sun
And moon and stars, Himself invisible ;
For we have gazed into His golden eyes,
Nor ever seen Him though we fasted sore,

And prayed whole nights what time the sky was
dark,
And quenched in earth-born gloom the sacred
fires.

And yet the word doth say that when the sign
At length appears our human eyes shall see
The King of angels and the Lord of Light.”
So Melchior spake, then leant upon the wall,
And bending forward gazed with eager eyes,
And lips half-parted, like the mariner
Who tosses shipwrecked on his raft and sees
A great ship’s lantern loom from out the night,
And cannot cry for joy. So pale he saw
Yet clear the promised sign. It was a star
That gleamed above the mountains great and
pale,

For faint it was when first the eye beheld,
But grew and deepened under earnest gaze
Until it seemed a very blaze of fire :
But once withdrawn the eye scarce caught again
A pale effulgence in the Western sky.
Long gazed he tranced, then turning suddenly
The star yet beaming in his eyes he went
To seek Belthassar.

IN QUIETNESS

THE whistling wind storms shrieking past,
The rumbling earth replies,
The mountains rock, the fires outleap
And arch the skies.

Through all the crash of earth and air
Unmoved the prophet trod :
But trembled at the still small voice ;
And knew it—God.

The world still worships only power,
It hails the ruthless will ;
The keenest brain, the strongest sword
Are conquerors still.

It knows not that in patient hope
Of God that mightier power,
His children stronger than the world
Await their hour.

1899

THE VALLEY OF THE DEAD

All day beneath the Syrian sun
The brass-shod arrows sped,
Axe, sword and spear drank deep of blood
None yielded save the dead.

When night at length bade cease the strife
None claimed the hard-fought day ;
Asleep beyond war's trumpet call
Victor and vanquished lay.

Sad mothers' eyes in distant lands
Long watched the vultures' flight ;
And jackal lean and fierce-eyed wolf
Held revel day and night.

And shone the sun and fell the rain,
And years ran swiftly by :
Till all the place was naught but bones,
And lo the bones were dry.

With slow, sad pace and low-bowed head
The exiled prophet trod,
And heard across the broad white plain
The chariot wheels of God.

A message clear from heaven to earth
 The echoing thunders give :
 "Look, son of man, and dost thou think
 That these dry bones can live ? "

"O God, Thou knowest," whispered he ;
 "Speak," came the answer dread.
 "Ye dry bones, hear the word of God,
 Live yet again, ye dead ! "

And lo a noise, a shaking sound
 As bone to bone fits in,
 And o'er the bones the sinews stretch,
 The flesh, and last the skin.

A mighty army rank on rank
 Like swathes of corn they lie ;
 Their nerveless arms no tremor stirs,
 Their pallid lips no cry.

Again the solemn voice is heard,
 "Come from the winds, O breath,
 Draw nigh and breathe upon these slain
 That life may conquer death."

And lo upon the word uprose
 That silent army, vast ;
 The captains shout, the ranks obey
 The trumpet's warning blast.

THE VALLEY OF THE DEAD 147

The banners wave, the marshalled hosts
Pass in procession long,
And ere the last are lost to sight
The prophet's soul is strong.

“ Ye say, ‘ Behold our hope is spent,
We see not any good ;
Our bones lie scattered wide, as when
The hewer breaketh wood.’

“ Yet from your graves ye shall arise ;
My people ye shall live ;
My spirit shall upon you rest,
My grace shall comfort give.”

So through the long succeeding years
God's lesson still is taught ;
God's miracle of life from death
Is daily, yearly wrought.

The spring still follows winter's gloom,
Dead lands renew their strength ;
Dry stumps have life, old roots revive
And blossom forth at length.

True poets wake dull nations' hearts
To battle for the right ;
True prophets stir the conscience dead
To feel and live and fight.

148 THE VALLEY OF THE DEAD

True love can thaw the frozen breast,
And make the dead heart sing,
True faith can make the desert sand
Bloom like a field in spring.

The sting is gone, the victory won
O'er that which men call death ;
'Tis but a sleep which wakes to life
At God the Spirit's breath.

O Death, O grave, thine hour is past ;
God lives ; man lives in God.
The faintest soul need never fear
The path our Christ has trod.

1897

HYMN FOR THE OPENING OF A SISTERHOOD CHAPEL

I

In hope and hesitation
Our humble seed was sown,
To-day to glad completion
The work of faith has grown ;
With hymns and psalms exulting
Our thankful sisters meet,
Within His sacred precincts
Their Holy Lord to greet.
To-day all care forgotten,
We lift our hearts and sing,
To Thee this House presenting
Our Saviour and our King.

II

Here may the Heavenly Father
With tender love divine,
On us His kneeling children
In benediction shine ;

To-day we seek His temple,
 Our one true resting place :
 Without the world's vain clamour
 Within His peace and grace.

To-day all care forgotten,
 We lift our hearts and sing,
 To Thee this House presenting
 Our Saviour and our King.

III

Within the Heavenly Bridegroom
 His sacred Feast doth spread,
 And here to faithful virgins
 He gives the Living Bread :
 Our weary souls refreshing
 With that most Holy Tide,
 Which once for us He lavished
 From out His wounded Side.

To-day all care forgotten,
 We lift our hearts and sing,
 To Thee this House presenting
 Our Saviour and our King.

IV

Here shall the Holy Spirit
 In meditation's hour
 On those who pray and ponder
 Descend in sevenfold power,

Correct with holy visions
Our self-will and our pride,
And into strength and wisdom
Our fainting spirits guide.

To-day all care forgotten,
We lift our hearts and sing,
To Thee this House presenting
Our Saviour and our King.

v

O Holy, Blessed Godhead,
Accept our gifts, our life,
And shield us from the menace
Of this world's care and strife ;
Here may the voice of children
Rise upward more and more
As they grow ever nearer
The God whom they adore.

To-day all care forgotten,
We lift our hearts and sing,
To Thee this House presenting
Our Saviour and our King.

A BAPTISMAL HYMN

THE wonder of life's hidden morn
Is perfected again,
And now for joy a man is born,
We count no more the pain.

O Father, for this little life
Entrusted from above,
Ere yet he face earth's sin and strife
We supplicate Thy love.

As Hannah to the Temple gate
Her dearest treasure bore,
So, Lord, to Thee we consecrate
This child for evermore.

By lustral water cleansed from sin,
Thy Cross upon his brow,
We bring him clean without, within,
The child of heaven now.

Thy faithful soldier may he fight
With falsehood, sin and shame,
And losing all to win the right,
Confess Thy Holy Name.

A BAPTISMAL HYMN

153

Thy faithful servant may he learn
To love and labour still,
And with a flaming spirit burn
To know and do Thy Will.

O Saviour, all he is is Thine,
And all he yet may be,
O shelter him with love divine,
And draw him near to Thee.

For Thou, O Lord, art all our life,
In Thee all struggles end :
Through all the sorrow and the strife
Our Maker and our Friend.

1917

I THANK THEE

THOU Maker of the wild bird's throat,
Teach me with deeper, truer note
To thank Thee.

For all the love of childish years,
For childish joy and childish tears,
I thank Thee.

For that rich scroll by nature spread,
Wherein Thy wondrous works I read,
I thank Thee.

For joy of life, for joy of health,
For all my needs required of wealth,
I thank Thee.

For tender friends, for loving hearts,
For souls whom sorrow never parts,
I thank Thee.

For keener joys, for deeper life,
For peace within this world of strife,
I thank Thee.

I THANK THEE

155

For gifts beyond the power of speech,
For thoughts the tongue can never teach,
I thank Thee.

For hopes that soar beyond the grave,
For One Who died my soul to save,
I thank Thee.

For Thine Own Self, so freely given,
Our strength on earth, our pledge of heaven,
I thank Thee.

O ever teach my grateful heart,
In life, in death, this simple part,
To thank Thee.

1888

HIS NAME

LORD of lords and King of angels,
While the worlds extol Thy fame,
Humbly would I sing Thy praises,
Humbly still exalt Thy Name.

When the mists are close around me,
When all pathways seem the same,
Sore bewildered still I trust Thee,
Still I glorify Thy Name.

In the hour of pain and sickness,
When the fever racks my frame,
For Thy pity, Lord, I bless Thee,
Praise and magnify Thy Name.

When my sin's dark flood o'erwhelms me,
And my head is bowed with shame,
For Thy patience, Lord, I thank Thee,
Crying softly on Thy Name.

If Thy gracious word absolve me,
Care I not though men may blame,
While I live my lips shall praise Thee,
Laud and magnify Thy Name.

When with joy my heart is swelling,
When I burn with Love's pure flame,
Then for ever I behold Thee,
Worship and adore Thy Name.

1912

ETERNAL LIFE

ETERNAL life is just to know
The only truth on earth below,
The only hope in heaven above,
The only source of lasting love.

Eternal life makes values plain,
And turns to dross our earthly gain,
It unifies the heart's desire,
And turns the lukewarm soul to fire.

Eternal life is having here
The vision of the Godhead clear.
To him who sees the Central Sun
The future and the past are one.

Eternal life is living so
That God is all we want to know,
And all we meet of good or ill
Is welcome just because His Will.

Eternal life is knowing Christ
And keeping with Him deathless tryst :
A dying day by day to "mine"
A living evermore to "Thine."

ETERNAL LIFE

159

Eternal life is just to see
What was and is and is to be,
To find in God Eternal Peace,
And in His love from self to cease.

1914

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